

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-20

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SUBJ: PRESIDENT-ELECT LOPEZ ADDRESSES NATIONAL HOMAGE BANQUET

REF: BOGOTA 6936

1. PRESIDENT-ELECT LOPEZ ADDRESSED A LARGE GATHERING AUGUST 2, 1974 AT A BANQUET BILLED AS A "NATIONAL HOMAGE" FOR HIM. IN HIS SPEECH HE OUTLINED GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS GOVERNMENT. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS:

A) CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT BY CONSENSUS: HE SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT BE AN IDEOLOGICAL COALITION BUT RATHER ONE WITH A CONSENSUS OF THE GREATEST NUMBER.

"WE ARE NOT GOING.... TO PROCEED AS IS (WE HAD) A VICTORIOUS HEGEMONY, IGNORING THE DEFEATED PARTIES OR THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS, BUT RATHER WE WILL BE ATTENTIVE TO THE CRITICS AND RECOGNIZE THE PREROGATIVES OF THE OPPOSITION", WHILE HE RECONGNIZED THAT HE HAS A STRONG MAJORITY, HE SAID HE WILL SEEK BROAD SUPPORT, THROUGH PERSUASION, TO ENACT HIS "CLEAR MANDATE". HE THOUGHT THIS KIND OF GOVERNMENT WOULD BE CONTROVERSIAL, YET," "IN THE TREATMENT OF THE (OPPOSITION) PARTIES LIES THE KEY TO THE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM", HE SAID. THE CONSENSUS HE INSISTED WILL HAVE TO BE LOCATED LEFT-OF -CENTER.

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"WE WILL SEEK A CONSENSUS BUT THE MAJORITY MUST DETERMINE WHERE THE UNDESTANDING WILL BE....IN THIS CASE I DO NOT HESITATE TO AFFIRM THAT....THE CONFLUENCE OF THE CONSENSUS MUST BE TO THE LEFT OF THE CENTER"....IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STRONG MAJORITY HE RECEIVED IN THE APRIL ELECTIONS. "WE ARE GOING TO CHANGE (SOCIETY), AWARE OF THE POPULAR DEMAND, AND ASSIGNING NEW PEOPLE TO THE TASK, SO THAT THE PRESIDENT CAN TRUTHFULLY SAY THAT IT IS NOT A MAN BUT A TEAM DIRECTING THE STATE WITH THE DESIRE TO SERVE POPULAR INTERESTS".

B) RELATIONS WITH CUBA AND THE CONCORDAT-EXAMPLES OF GOVERNMENT BY CONSENSUS. LOPEZ CITED TWO EXAMPLES OF HOW A GOVERNMENT BY CONSENSUS CAN WORK, THE RENEWED DISCUSSIONS OVER RELATIONS WITH CUBA AND THE SUPPORT HE HAS GIVEN FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE NEW CONCORDAT WITH THE VATICAN. THE FORMER WAS REPORTED BY REFTTEL. CONCERNING THE CONCORDAT, HE SAID THAT THE NEW AGREEMENT PRESENTED BY THE OUTGOING PASTRANA ADMINISTRATION FOR APPROVAL BY CONGRESS DID NOT SATISFY LARGE SECTORS OF COLOMBIAN SOCIETY WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE, A VIEW WITH WHICH LOPEZ AGREED. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAID THAT THE SUPPORT HE SOUGHT DURING THE CAMPAIGN CARRIED WITH IT A PROMISE TO SUPPORT THE CONCORDAT. "THE DIVORCE, TO WHICH I REFERRED IN THE CAMPAIGN, WAS CIVIL DIVORCE IN THE CASE OF CIVIL MARRIAGE". REALIZING THAT THE CONCORDAT, WHICH WAS APPROVED AFTER LONG AND SOMETIMES BITTER DEBATE BY THE CHAMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES LAST YEAR, FACED A TOUGHER FIGHT IN THE SENATE, DUE TO STRONG OPPOSITION BY SENATORS FAVORING SEPARATION OF THE CHURCH AND STATE, LOPEZ SAID HE SOUGHT A COMPROMISE. THE COMPROMISE WHICH HE, THE OUTGOING ADMINISTRATION AND THE VATICAN APPROVED IS TO BE REVIEWED AND, LOPEZ IMPLIED, GRADUALLY DISMANTLED. MEANWHILE, HE PROMISED THAT THE CONGRESS WOULD SOON ENACT LEGISLATION APPROVING CIVIL DIVORCE TO FULFILL THE ELECTION PROMISE, AND TO SATISFY, IN PART, THOSE FAVORING SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

C) GOVERNMENT OF SACRIFICE: TURNING TO ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, LOPEZ PROMISED THERE WOULD BE NO "LEGISLATIVE ORGY" SETTING OFF CAPITAL FLIGHTS AND DISCOURAGING INVESTMENT. BUT HE CALLED FOR SACRIFICES FROM ALL, ESPECIALLY FROM THOSE BEST ABLE TO AFFORD IT. CONSTANT VALUE SAVING CERTIFICATES (UPAC) AND EXPORT TAX CREDIT

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CERTIFICATES (CAT) WILL BE REVISED, BUT NO SPECIFICS OFFERED. HE NOTED THAT US\$12 MILLION WITHDRAWN FROM UPAC SYSTEM IN RECENT DAYS, AND OFFERED ASSURANCES THAT CHANGES HE HAD IN MIND WOULD NOT BE CAUSE FOR PANIC. LOPEZ EMPHASIZED THE PROBLEM OF INFLATION AND ITS WORLWIDE RAMIFICATIONS. HE REFRAINED FROM DESCRIBING HIS ANTI-INFLATIONARY PROGRAM, MERELY REITERATING THE NEED FOR SACRIFICE BY ALL. UNDERLINING SERIOUSNESS OF PROBLEM, HE SUGGESTED HIS GOVERNMENT MIGHT SUFFER A TEMPORARY DROP IN

POPULARITY BECAUSE OF MEASURES HE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE.
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